

TO: Boards of Selectmen in Arlington and Needham

FROM: Edward A. Bouquillon, Superintendent

**CC: Minuteman District School Committee
Boards of Selectmen in All Member Towns**

DATE: May 5, 2016

RE: Next Steps on the Minuteman Building Project – Stay the Course Without Asking for a District-Wide Ballot

As you have probably heard by now, Town Meeting in Belmont last night voted to disapprove bonding for the Minuteman building project. While disappointing, this action does not end the project or stop the 60-day clock that the Minuteman School Committee set in motion with its vote authorizing \$144.9 million of debt on March 15, 2016.

Following last night's vote, I have been asked by several town officials what advice I would give to Arlington and Needham, the two remaining non-departing towns which have yet to consider this matter. Both are scheduled to take up the issue on Monday, May 9.

Here is my simple advice to both Arlington and Needham: Stay the course. Please take up the Article at Town Meeting on May 9 and join the seven other non-departing member towns¹ in supporting construction of the new school.

With the support of Arlington and Needham -- and the expected votes in Boxborough, Carlisle and Weston to "pass over" the matter since they will no longer be members as of July 1, 2017 -- 15 of the 16 member towns will stand united. With such a united front, we can talk with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) about their local approval deadlines and how we can best proceed.

I would like to clarify one final issue: **I do not intend to recommend to the School Committee that we proceed with a district-wide referendum on the project.** While only the School Committee has the legal authority to determine whether to invoke that provision of the law, I will not recommend a district-wide ballot. As Superintendent, I am now convinced that it is not the best way to get us to "Yes."

If you have any questions, please call me. Thank you.

Submitted on behalf of the Minuteman High School administration by
Michael Ruderman, TMM Precinct 9, 5 May 2016

¹ Acton, Bolton, Concord, Dover, Lancaster, Lexington, and Stow all approved the project by wide margins, some unanimously.